

III. REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-9, 11-13, 15-21, 23, and 24-26 are pending in this application. Claim 25 was previously withdrawn. By this amendment, each of claims 1, 9, 19, 24, and 26 has been amended and claims 5, 10, 14, and 22 have been cancelled. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant does not acquiesce in the correctness of the rejections or objections and reserves the right to present specific arguments regarding any rejected or objected-to claims not specifically addressed. Further, Applicant reserves the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 9, 24, and 26 are objected to as allegedly being unclear as to whether Applicant intends to claim the recited component to be sealed against in combination with the seal. This is not Applicant's intent. Accordingly, the objected-to claims has been amended to recite the fixed and free portions as "adapted to be" angled, positioned, etc. relative to the component to be sealed against. Accordingly, Applicant asserts that the basis for the objection has been obviated and respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 19, and 23 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over US patent No. 6,352,263 to Gail et al. in view of US Patent No. 6,220,602 to Webster et al, claims 2, 18, 20, and 26 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Gail et al. in view of Webster et al. in further view of US Patent No. 4,813,608 to Holowach et al., claims 6

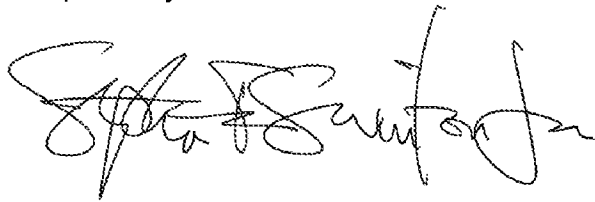
and 7 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Gail et al. in view of Webster et al. in further view of US Patent No. 5,042,823 to Mackay et al., and, although the Office Action is unclear and incomplete, it appears that claim 24 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Gail et al. in view of Webster et al.

Applicant acknowledges and appreciates the Office's indication that claims 3-5, 11-15, 21, and 22, while objected to, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. By this Amendment, the substance of claim 5 has been incorporated into independent claim 1, the substance of claims 10 and 14 has been incorporated into independent claim 9, and the substance of claim 22 has been incorporated into independent claim 19. As such, Applicant asserts that claims 1, 9, and 19, as well as claims 2-4, 6-9, 11-13, 15-18, 20, 21, and 23, which depend therefrom, are allowable, and respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Claims 24 and 26 have each been amended to also incorporate the substance of claim 5. As such, Applicant asserts that claims 24 and 26 are also allowable and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Applicant asserts that any dependent claim not specifically addressed above is allowable for the reasons given above as well as its own unique features. In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections and objections and allowance of the application. Should the Examiner require anything further from Applicant, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen F. Swinton, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Stephen F. Swinton, Jr.
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Date: 12 April 2007

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